

*Amendments*Amendments to Claims Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.173(b) and (d)

The Applicants previously requested amendment of claim 32 in the Applicants' communication of June 27, 2003, as provided below, and presents herewith such amendment in proper format in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.173(b) and (d).

Please insert after "temperature solidification environment" in the third subparagraph of claim 32 the phrase:

-- having a top portion and a bottom portion --.

Please insert after "at least one heat transfer medium" in the third subparagraph of claim 32 the phrase:

-- provided to the top portion of the temperature solidification environment at a first temperature and provided to the bottom portion of the temperature solidification environment at a second temperature to establish --.

Please delete "forming" from the third subparagraph of claim 32, as noted in the brackets.

32. (Amended) A method for forming and solidifying uniform sized and shaped solid spheres, the method comprising:

providing a supply of a low viscosity liquid material in a crucible,

applying a minute periodic disturbance to the low viscosity liquid material in the crucible,

applying a pressure to the low viscosity liquid material, the pressure forcing the material through at least one orifice in the crucible as a steady laminar stream, the stream of the material exiting into an enclosed controlled low temperature solidification environment having a temperature of less than about 0° C., the enclosed controlled low temperature solidification environment having a top portion and a bottom portion containing at least one heat transfer medium provided to the top portion of the temperature solidification environment at a first temperature and provided to the bottom portion of the temperature solidification environment at a second temperature to establish

[forming] a heat gradient within the enclosed controlled low temperature solidification environment;

breaking the stream of material up into a plurality of uniform sized and shaped liquid spheres, and

allowing the liquid spheres to pass through the heat transfer medium in the top portion and the bottom portion of the enclosed controlled low temperature solidification environment to cool and solidify into the uniform sized and shaped solid spheres.

The Applicants previously requested addition of new claims 37-40 to the present application in the Applicant's communication of June 27, 2003, as provided below, and presents herewith such new claims in proper format in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.173(b) and (d).

37. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the at least one heat transfer medium includes one of a cooling fluid, a liquefied gas and a liquid halo-carbon.

38. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein the at least one heat transfer medium in the first portion of the temperature solidification environment absorbs heat of fusion from the liquid spheres.

39. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the bottom portion of the temperature solidification environment includes a second heat transfer medium.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein the second heat transfer medium includes a supply of a liquid material which removes heat from the spheres.